

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-11 (canceled).

12. (New) A method for operating a drive unit of a vehicle, comprising:

specifying a setpoint for at least one output variable of the drive unit; and

specifying a setpoint for an operating variable of the drive unit in at least one operating state of the drive unit;

wherein, in the at least one operating state of the drive unit, the at least one output variable of the drive unit is specified regardless of the setpoint for the at least one output variable, by approximating an actual value for the operating variable to the setpoint for the operating variable.

13. (New) A method for operating a drive unit of a vehicle, comprising:

specifying a setpoint for at least one output variable of the drive unit;

specifying a setpoint for an operating variable of the drive unit in at least one operating state of the drive unit; and

modifying the at least one output variable of the drive unit in the at least one operating state of the drive unit, starting from the setpoint for the at least one output variable, by approximating an actual value for the operating variable to the setpoint for the operating variable;

wherein the at least one operating state of the drive unit includes a gear shift operation of a transmission.

14. (New) The method as recited in Claim 12, wherein the at least one output variable is one of a torque and a power of the drive unit.

15. (New) The method as recited in Claim 13, wherein the at least one output variable is one of a torque and a power of the drive unit.

16. (New) The method as recited in Claim 12, wherein the operating variable is a speed of an engine of the drive unit.

17. (New) The method as recited in Claim 13, wherein the operating variable is a speed of an engine of the drive unit.

18. (New) The method as recited in Claim 12, wherein the at least one operating state is a start-up operating state of the drive unit.

19. (New) The method as recited in Claim 13, wherein the at least one operating state is a start-up operating state of the drive unit.

20. (New) The method as recited in Claim 12, wherein the at least one output variable of the drive unit is specified by a regulator.

21. (New) The method as recited in Claim 12, wherein the drive unit is operated with an internal combustion engine, and wherein a first output variable of the drive unit is specified for an ignition path of the internal combustion engine, and a second output variable of the drive unit is specified for an air path of the internal combustion engine.

22. (New) The method as recited in Claim 13, wherein the drive unit is operated with an internal combustion engine, and wherein a first output variable of the drive unit is specified for an ignition path of the internal combustion engine, and a second output variable of the drive unit is specified for an air path of the internal combustion engine.

23. (New) The method as recited in Claim 12, wherein the setpoint for the at least one output variable is implemented without modification after the end of the at least one operating state.

24. (New) A device for operating a drive unit of a vehicle, comprising:

- an arrangement for specifying a setpoint for at least one output variable of the drive unit;

- a first specification unit for specifying a setpoint for an operating variable of the drive unit in at least one operating state of the drive unit; and

- a second specification unit for specifying, in the at least one operating state, the at least one output variable of the drive unit regardless of the setpoint for the at least one output variable, by approximating an actual value for the operating variable to the setpoint for the operating variable.

25. (New) A device for operating a drive unit of a vehicle, comprising:

- an arrangement for specifying a setpoint for at least one output variable of the drive unit;

- a first specification unit for specifying a setpoint for an operating variable of the drive unit in at least one operating state of the drive unit;

an arrangement for modifying the at least one output variable of the drive unit in the at least one operating state of the drive unit, starting from the setpoint for the at least one output variable, by approximating an actual value for the operating variable to the setpoint for the operating variable;

wherein the at least one operating state of the drive unit includes a gear shift operation of a transmission.